DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 401 657 EC 305 102

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TITLE Challenging Behaviour: Analysis and Intervention in People with Learning Disabilities.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-521-40485-1
PUB DATE 95
NOTE 233p.
AVAILABLE FROM Cambridge University Press, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211 ($95).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Adults; *Behavior Disorders; *Behavior Modification; Children; Drug Therapy; Elementary Secondary Education; Epidemiology; Evaluation Methods; Foreign Countries; Incidence; *Intervention; *Learning Disabilities; *Mental Retardation; Models; Multiple Disabilities; Training Methods
IDENTIFIERS Applied Behavior Analysis; Behavior Management; *Functional Assessment; Great Britain

ABSTRACT

This book offers a British perspective on ways of conceptualizing, assessing, and intervening in the challenging behavior of people with severe learning disabilities, with emphasis on the types of technical support needed. An introductory chapter explains why the term "learning disability" is used rather than mental handicap, mental retardation, or intellectual impairment and defines challenging behavior. Chapter 2 argues that challenging behavior must be seen as a social construction and behavioral interventions must be assessed on the basis of their social validity. Chapter 3 examines the evidence regarding the prevalence, risk factors, and natural history of challenging behaviors. In chapter 4, the models and concepts which underlie behavioral approaches to analysis and intervention are discussed, with an emphasis on recent developments in applied behavior analysis. Discussion of the broad perspectives and issues that should guide behavioral interventions is offered in chapter 5. Chapter 6 considers the aims of a behavioral assessment in terms of identifying the social impact of the behavior and its behavioral function. In chapter 7, the main behavioral approaches, such as nonaversive behavioral support, are examined. Chapter 8 discusses the integration of behavioral and neurobiological approaches, reviewing evidence in support of psychopharmcological approaches. Chapter 9 looks at long-term management of challenging behaviors. The final chapter provides a summary and conclusions. (Contains approximately 700 references.) (DB)

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